

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 003162

SIPDIS

STATE PASS AIT/W

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/10/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: CHEN 10/10 SPEECH OFFERS CONCILIATORY MESSAGE

Classified By: AIT Deputy Director David J. Keegan, Reason: 1.4 (B/D)

[11](#). (C) Summary: President Chen Shui-bian used his October 10 National Day speech to send conciliatory messages to Beijing and opposition supporters in Taiwan. Chen reiterated a number of cross-Strait related themes from his May 20 inaugural address and proposed restarting dialogue with Beijing "on the basis of the 1992 meeting in Hong Kong." Chen's positive overtures on dialogue, enhanced trade relations, and a reduction of military tensions were tempered by his warning that the "forces of darkness" across the Taiwan Strait have aimed more than 600 missiles at Taiwan. He then used that warning to call for strengthening self-defense. Chen also made a strong pitch for Taiwan's entry into the United Nations and other international fora, blaming PRC diplomatic pressure for pushing Taiwan's people further away from the Mainland. On the domestic front, Chen appealed for ethnic harmony and political unity. Chen barely mentioned plans for constitutional revision after the December Legislative Yuan (LY) elections. End Summary.

May 20, Part II

[12](#). (SBU) President Chen Shui-bian's October 10 National Day speech mixed conciliatory gestures to Beijing and opposition parties with appeals to Taiwan pride and calls for international recognition. Almost a third of the speech related to the future of cross-Strait relations. Chen reiterated a number of his May 20 inaugural themes, including his commitment not to rule out any form of future political relationship between the "ROC and PRC or China and Taiwan." He also emphasized that he would not deviate from his May 20 commitments during his term in office. Chen announced that he would convene his proposed Committee for Cross-Strait Peace and Stability after the December LY election and include leaders from all political parties. He also restated post-election plans to move forward on the "constitutional reform project" and other "national policy issues that are of vital importance to the people."

Overtures: The 1992 Formula and Direct Links

[13](#). (SBU) Chen asserted that recent leadership changes in PRC offered a new opportunity for progress in cross-Strait relations. Targeting this new leadership, Chen invited the PRC to restart dialogue with Taiwan "on the basis of the 1992 meeting in Hong Kong." This was the most explicit endorsement he has yet given to the formula used to facilitate cross-Strait dialogue in 1992, when both sides in effect agreed not to challenge the other's definition of "one China." Chen characterized the 1992 arrangement as "not necessarily perfect but acceptable" as a framework for future dialogue.

[14](#). (SBU) Chen's speech also suggested specific areas for possible cooperation, including direct cross-Strait passenger and cargo charter flights. Chen put the charter flight proposal in the context of an emerging new economic relationship between the two sides that will take advantage of a "division of labor in the global supply chain." Chen also called on the two sides to reduce military tensions across the Strait. Noting his own decision to cancel September "Han-kuang" military exercises, Chen stated that if the two sides could exercise self-restraint in the near term, it would pave the way for future discussions on terminating the current state of hostilities. Chen said that negotiation of a "Code of Conduct across the Taiwan Strait" should be set as the long-term goal for both sides.

Warnings: Sha Zukang and other "Forces of Darkness"

[15](#). (SBU) Chen's offer for dialogue with the new leadership in Beijing was tempered by strong warnings over the threat of PRC diplomatic and military intimidation. Chen disputed the PRC's claim to represent Taiwan in the United Nations and stated that Beijing's diplomatic pressure was driving the people on the two sides of the Strait further apart. Without citing PRC Ambassador to Geneva Sha Zukang by name, Chen recited Sha's well-known "nobody cares about you" insult to Taiwan reporters after Taipei's failed 2003 bid for World

Health Organization (WHO) observership to illustrate the Beijing's "flagrant attitude."

16. (SBU) To reinforce the need for upgrading Taiwan's self-defense capabilities, Chen also warned his people about the dangers posed by the "forces of darkness" across the Strait. Chen said the 600 ballistic missiles pointed at Taiwan represented a "shadow of terror" that neither Taiwan nor the international community could afford to ignore. Chen added that these "forces of darkness" and "shadows of terror" threatened both the peaceful status quo in the Taiwan Strait and the security of the region and the world.

Domestic Appeal: "The Republic of China Is Taiwan"

17. (SBU) Chen declared that the "Republic of China is Taiwan, and Taiwan is the Republic of China" in the context of a domestic appeal for unity. Chen told the audience that it did not matter whether an individual identifies with "Taiwan or the Republic of China, per se, any such professed expression of national identity is a testament to one's loyalty to this country." Chen promised that he and his party would make a candid self-reflection on the issue of identity and ethnicity. At the same time, he urged others not to dwell upon the "victory or defeat of each election" and instead seize new opportunities for rebuilding solidarity.

Comment: Something for Everybody

18. (C) Chen's speech addressed a wide range of often contradictory themes and audiences. His references to the "1992 Hong Kong" formula and reducing military tensions were clearly meant to be the headliners for Beijing. At the same time, Chen's warning about the growing PRC military threat was calibrated to strengthen the government's case for early LY action on the USD 18 billion special defense procurement budget. Similarly, Chen's appeals to Taiwan pride and greater international recognition likely targeted his own base, while his focus on the "ROC" and ethnic unity aimed at opposition supporters. Rhetoric about the "forces of darkness" notwithstanding, Chen's 1992 formula should offer Beijing some opening to respond positively, if and when it chooses to do so. Officials in Taipei tell us they will wait for Beijing's response before deciding on further possible concessions to get around the "one China" deadlock.

PAAL